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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/825,912	04/04/2001	Michael J. Smith	FIRE 0111 PUS	3738

22045 7590 03/12/2003

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EXAMINER
PAIK, STEVE S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2876	

DATE MAILED: 03/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/825,912	SMITH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Steven S. Paik	2876	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *04 April 2001* .

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-26* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-26* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) *6* .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brooks, Jr. et al. (US 6,067,530) in view of Cedergren (US 5,164,718).

Re claims 1, 11, and 15, Brooks, Jr. et al. disclose a cash management system comprising at least one safe (electronic drop safe 24). The electronic safe further comprises a housing (Fig. 3A-3G) having an interior compartment for securing money, and an outer door (48) having a locking mechanism to control access to the interior compartment. The cash management system further comprises a data input device (key pad 80), an electronic display (82), a connector interface (84-88 and col. 9, ll. 30-37) mounted to the housing and a control system (36) arranged to communicate with the data input device (80), electronic device (82), connector interface (84-88) and lock mechanism, where the control system includes a processor (90 and col. 9, ll.65-67) programmed to control operation of the safe and operating with a central system control (43) when connected to at least one other remote safe (Fig. 1A and 1B) via the connector interface (reference numeral 42A) to monitor and accumulate financial and operational information for each unit (col. 6, ll. 19-31). The cash management system comprises a central processing system (store host computer 43) integrated with one of the money control devices and arranged to

control operation of the integrated device where the central processing system is connected to all other network devices (cashier stations #1-#n and system printer and other processing center 28) and communicate with all the other network devices.

Although Brooks, Jr. et al. clearly disclose the safe is operated electronically in a network environment, he does not specifically disclose the locking mechanism having an electronic lock mechanism.

Cedergren discloses a safe comprising an electronic lock mechanism (Fig. 1) controlled via a code lock with a unique locking code. The unique locking code is related to a predetermined unlocking signal code for an added security. The electronic lock mechanism prevents unauthorized access to the contents, which are to be transported or stored (col. 1, ll. 34-37).

Therefor, it would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further incorporate an electronic lock mechanism, as taught by Cedergren, to the cash management system of Brooks, Jr. et al. for the purposes of increasing security and prevents unauthorized access to a storage device of valuables such as safe. Furthermore, such modification of employing an electronic lock mechanism to the locking mechanism of Brooks, Jr. et al. would have been an obvious matter of design variation, well within the ordinary skill in the art, and therefore an obvious expedient.

Re claims 2, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, where the at least one safe (24) further comprises a bill validator apparatus (44) mounted to the housing for receiving and validating bills of various denominations (col. 11, ll. 47-55), and a storage device located within the safe for

storing all validated bills, wherein the processor is programmed to maintain a record of all received and validated bills (col. 11, ll. 62-67 and col. 12, ll. 1-11).

Re claims 3, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, further comprising a cash dispensing apparatus (cash register (38) drawer and tray not shown) mounted to the housing, the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of openings in the housing arranged to be loaded with containers each containing money of a predetermined value (such as $1, $5, $10, $20, and coins), and a separate opening and dispensing tray in the housing to dispense money containers (46) for removal from the safe (col. 4, ll. 4-10).

Re claims 4, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, where the control system (36) is further programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money, recognize user identification data, and store transaction data and associated user identity data (individual cashier I.D.) in a memory; wherein the processor (90) is further arranged to process and sort stored transaction and operational data to generate an audit report and accounting reports (col. 12, line 40 - col. 20, line 51 discloses an operating mode and a manager mode to generate desired reports including audit and cashier activity reports).

Re claims 5, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, wherein a remote safe unit (cahier station #1-#n) is connected to the connector interface (84-88), the remote safe unit comprising a bill validator apparatus (44) mounted to a housing thereof for receiving and validating bills of various denominations (col. 11, ll. 47-55), and a storage device located within the remote safe for

storing all validated bills, wherein the processor is programmed to maintain a record of all received and validated bills in the remote safe (col. 11, ll. 62-67 and col. 12, ll. 1-11).

Re claims 6, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, wherein the connection interface (84-88) comprises a communications port (Fig. 7 and col. 9, ll. 31-37) to allow communication between the control system (36) and a remote computer (43).

Re claims 7, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, wherein a remote safe unit (cashier station #1-#n) is connected to the connector interface (84-88), the remote safe unit comprising a cash dispensing apparatus (cash register (38) drawer and tray not shown) mounted to a housing thereof, the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of openings in the housing arranged to be loaded with containers each containing money of a predetermined value (such as $1, $5, $10, $20, and coins), and a separate opening (and dispensing tray in the housing to dispense money containers (46) for removal from the safe (col. 4, ll. 4-10), wherein the processor (36) is programmed to maintain a record (col. 10, ll. 5-20 and col. 11, ll. 64-67) of all money load and dispensed from the remote safe (24).

Re claims 8, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, wherein the processor (36 in Fig. 5) is programmed to recognize different levels of user system access authority (cashier operating mode and manager mode).

Re claims 9 and 10, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system as recited in rejected claim 1 stated above, wherein one or more remote safe

units (cashier stations #!-#n) are connected to the connector interface (42a), and the processor is further programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money, recognize user identification data, and store transaction data and associated user identity data (individual cashier I.D.) in a memory; wherein the processor (90) is arranged to process and sort stored transaction and operational data to generate an individual and totaled audit and accounting reports (col. 12, line 40 - col. 20, line 51 discloses an operating mode and a manager mode to generate desired reports including audit and cashier activity reports which can be broken down to each individual cashier level).

Re claim 12, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the central processing system (43) is arranged to automatically detect and assign network addresses for devices added to the network (cashier station numbers obviously is unique to each cash register and may be considered as a network address used to identify each one of them distinctively).

Re claim 13, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the other network devices comprise a data entry subsystem (input device) arranged to receive and recognize user identification data (cashier I.D.), and transmit the data to the central processing system (43), wherein the central processing system is arranged to determine whether the user is authorized to access system (cashier ? or manager?), and controlling operation of the network device based on the authorization determination (a manager obviously has more accessibility to the system related to managing employees and operating a store).

Re claim 14, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the data entry system (input keypad) is arranged to receive the user identification data (cashier I.D.) in the form of at least a user number, electronic key, or biometric identification.

Re claim 16, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the network device is a cash dispensing system (34) the cash dispensing apparatus including a set of openings arranged to be loaded with containers each containing cash of a predetermined value (such as $1, $5, $10, $20, and coins), and a separate opening and dispenser to dispense each cash containers for removal from the safe, wherein the cash dispensing apparatus is arranged to maintain an accounting of all containers and provide a report to the central processing system (43).

Re claim 17, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the network device (34) comprises a universal interface (42A) designed to communicate with a plurality types of bill validators (44) arranged to receive and validate bills of various denominations (col. 11, ll. 47-55), and a storage device for storing all validated bills, wherein the universal interface is l programmed to maintain a record of all received and validated bills and provide a report to the central processing system (43).

Re claims 18-20, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, wherein the central

processing system (43) is programmed to recognize different levels of user system access authority (cashier operating mode and manager mode) as a function of time or date.

Re claim 21, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, where the central processing system (43) is programmed to assign selected devices (any of cashier stations from #1-#n) to an access group to provide flexible levels of user access.

Re claim 22, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, where the central processing system (43) is further programmed to accumulate and track deposits and withdrawals of money from all devices on the network, recognize user identification data, and store transaction data and associated user identity data (individual cashier I.D.) in a memory for each device connected to the network; wherein the central processing system is arranged to process and sort stored transaction and operational data to generate an individual and totaled audit and accounting reports (col. 12, line 40 - col. 20, line 51 discloses an operating mode and a manager mode to generate desired reports including audit and cashier activity reports).

Re claim 23-25, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, where the central processing system (43) is programmed and arranged to generate audit and financial reports including break down of each cashier's level and for a specific time period (appendix in col. 18-20).

Re claim 26, Brooks, Jr. et al. in view of Cedergren discloses the cash management system in a network environment as recited in rejected claim 11 stated above, where each device

(cashier stations #1-#n and printer) connected to the network is arranged to store individual configuration information, monetary totals and a selected audit information to facilitate replacement of the central processing system. Brooks, Jr. et al. discloses a modular system that may permit the replacement of any device within the network at easy (col. 7, ll. 23-30).

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Meeker (US 5,883,371) discloses a safe including a bill receiver for validating bills of various denominations and a cash dispenser mounted on a chamber dispenses cartridges containing units of cash one at a time in response to a signal.

Ohnishi et al. (US 4,502,120) discloses a subsystem having an input device for inputting data, an operation device for operating the data, a memory device for memorizing the data, and a transmitting device for dividing the data into parts and transmitting every parts of the data into a master system.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven S. Paik whose telephone number is 703-308-6190. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri (5:300am-2:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached on 703-305-3503. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-6893 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0530.

Steven Paik
Steven S. Paik
Examiner
Art Unit 2876

ssp
March 6, 2003

MICHAEL G. LEE
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